

# UNCLE SAM SHOULD BUILD BIG IRRIGATION WORKS

## Expert Mead Gives Cogent Reasons Why the Government Should Act.

### Variations Arguments Advanced By Wyoming Man in Prepared Paper Demonstrating the Correctness of His Position.

(Special Correspondence.)  
WASHINGTON, May 25.—At this evening's meeting of the American Society of Civil Engineers, Professor Elwood Mead, irrigation expert for the department of agriculture, discussed the question: "Should the National Government build large Irrigation Works?" In the course of the discussion Professor Mead said, in part:

There are two classes of irrigation works which the government may properly build and operate. Under the first are reservoirs located in the channels of streams whose water is used in irrigation; under the second are diversion works of great magnitude and cost. Both promote the public welfare in such manner that public opinion should favor the existence of this aid.

Reservoirs are a necessity to the largest and best use of the water supply of the arid regions. There is scarcely a stream which can be fully utilized in irrigation without storing a part of its flow. This is due to the fact that streams do not rise and fall with the demand for water in irrigation; they are high when but little water is used, and low when water is most needed and most valuable.

When Water Is Needed.

While the mountain snows are melting, large volumes of water run to waste, but when the snows are gone, streams shrink to a mere shadow of their former volume, and the low stage occurs when the needs of irrigators are greatest. The studies of the duty of water now being carried on by the irrigation investigations of the United States department of agriculture show that water is most needed in the month of July. The measurements of the water used in irrigation in the different months of the irrigation season, when compared with the flow of streams, as shown by the gaugings of the United States geological survey, reveal the fact that a large part of the water supply runs to waste before it can be profitably used. In the Colorado, for example, the discharge of Clear creek, one of the irrigation streams of northern Wyoming, in June, 1898, was 32,000 acre-feet; in July it was less than 10,000 acre-feet.

Four-fifths of the streams used in irrigation furnish similar examples. Irrigators have come to understand this. They have found out that a shortage of water in July and August is destructive to the farmer on irrigated land as is a drought to the farmer who depends on rain. Without reservoirs, successful agriculture in the west is restricted to crops which require early irrigation, and which are almost invariably of little value, or to the area which can be irrigated from the low water flow of streams.

Reservoirs Only Salvation.

Before the facts were understood, many ditches were built to utilize the floods of spring and early summer. Much of the land under these ditches is now either idle or the settlers who cultivate it often suffer severe losses. The construction of reservoirs is the only means of improving these unsatisfactory conditions. Water which now runs to waste can be made to perform an important service by bringing under cultivation large areas not farmed or uncultivated. Such reservoirs will not only increase the farmed area, but add to the profits and security of the farmer, and will be worth far more than they will cost. Why, then, should their construction not be left to private capital? The answer is: To avoid legal and economic complications over water rights. Storage works located in stream channels must receive all the water which comes down from the mountains above. They intercept the water when the river is low, when it is all needed, and all belongs to those having vested rights. Many of these reservoirs will be in places remote from the lands now irrigated. The farmers who need all the natural flow cannot see what is taking place, and when they suffer from shortage of the reservoir which stands between their farm and the mountains above, if it is a private property, will almost inevitably be held responsible. Distrust and anxiety thus roused will lead to controversy, if not litigation. All these evils will be less likely to arise if the works are public. Irrigators below will be less likely to suspect interference with their rights when the works are under public control than when they are operated for private gain.

Other Reasons Given.

There are other reasons why these works should be public property. Where storage works are built and controlled as private enterprises, there is danger that the owners of such works will trade upon the necessities of farmers and when their water rates are in drought, will charge such high rates that the prosperity of irrigated agriculture will be endangered. But if these works are built by the government, the tendency will be to make water rates uniform and stable. The doctrine of public ownership can be maintained over the stored supply as well as over the natural flow. Monopoly of water will be impossible, and its abuses averted.

The argument for public reserves is not, therefore, that private capital cannot afford to build them, because recent experience has shown that many of these works can be made highly profitable; but that they should be regarded as a public utility just as we regard bridges across streams on public roads. There is no question that toll bridges on many highways would pay, and there is equally no question that while they would be profitable to their owners, they would be a nuisance to everyone else. That it is believed, would be the experience with many private reservoirs located in running streams.

Cost Would Be Repaid.

The construction on large rivers by the government of costly diversion dams and main canals is justified by the fact that the United States owns large tracts of land now practically worthless, but which could be made habitable and productive by this outlay. If ownership carries with it responsibility, then it is the duty as well as to the interest of the government to so administer this property as to make it provide the largest possible opportunities for those seeking homes on the public domain. To say that the government shall take the attitude of an alien landlord who makes no improvements and pays no taxes is an enlightened conception of its duty, nor is it just to the arid states.

Neither individuals nor corporations will undertake these works unless there is a prospect of profit commensurate with the risk. If this profit is realized, it will put the cost of these lands beyond the means of poor men, who are the ones to be looked after in the disposal of the public domain. Only the well-to-do can buy land which costs from \$15 to \$25 an acre for a water supply and about as much more to build the laterals, provide a house and prepare the land for cultivation. The government, however, can better afford to do this work than can private enterprises, because the government derives an indirect return which private enterprises cannot share. Every acre of land reclaimed adds to the taxable wealth of the country, it adds to the greatness and strength of the nation. These benefits will be unending and will increase with time. They are worth the outlay required.

Interstate Arguments.

It is proper that the nation should build these works, because some of them will be located in one state, while the water will be used in another state. It will be a much simpler arrangement to have this work done by the federal government, than to have states reach an agreement. Some of the states are too poor to utilize their resources, some are prevented by constitutional restrictions. The federal government can secure the needed funds from the sales of public lands, and build these works without any burden to taxpayers, east or west. The states have no such resource. They cannot sell the public lands, which in some states comprise more than 60 percent of the total area.

There are also some vexed questions relating to the respective spheres of state and national authority over the waters of the United States. Each state now controls the division of water within its borders and is likely to continue to do so, but there is need that this control shall be more effective in order that controversies may be averted and the rights of actual users of streams made secure. In order to do this it must be known what is to be the field of control of the nation and what of the state.

We are beginning to realize that the framing of laws to govern the control and use of water are among our most vital and perplexing problems. Many of the streams used by irrigators empty into navigable rivers, and it is not known whether the steamboat or orchard and garden are to have first claim on the mountain snows. There are interstate streams which are controlled on one side of a boundary by the doctrine of appropriation and on the other side by the doctrine of riparian rights. Which of these policies is ultimately to prevail?

The construction and operation by the nation of irrigation works of the character above described will tend to promote the enactment of more uniform and better laws by the states; it will help to educate public opinion regarding the legal and economic problems which irrigation development is creating, and in the end make the arid region a more valuable and prosperous part of the nation than if development is left wholly to private enterprise.

MEAT FAMINE MAY RESULT FROM STRIKE

Chicago, May 25.—Five hundred union teamsters, employed in the delivery of meat to the packers, went on strike at midnight for a substantial increase in wages and for shorter hours. As a result of the strike the men say no meat will be delivered to the city until the strike is over. The strikers assert that committees from the managers of the different packing houses.

BRYAN AND JOHNSON HOLD SECRET SESSION

Chicago, May 25.—William Jennings Bryan and Mayor Tom Johnson of Cleveland were in conference for two hours, immediately after which Mr. Bryan left for St. Paul. The object of the meeting was not revealed.

PAUNCEFOTE'S FUNERAL.

Washington, May 25.—With the exception of a few details, the arrangements for the funeral services over the remains of Lord Pauncefote, the British ambassador, are now complete. Lady Pauncefote today signified her approval of the arrangements tentatively made yesterday, by which services are to be held Wednesday at noon in St. John's Episcopal church, after which the body is to be temporarily deposited at a receiving vault at Rockway beach, where a military escort will be provided by the war department to attend the funeral, which will be of a state character.

A large number of messages of condolence from all over the world were received at the embassy today, but they were not made public.

SUDDEN ENDING OF A DINNER.

Breaking of a Steel Bridge Girder Nearly Causes Heavy Loss of Life. New York, May 25.—Three hundred persons were dining on the great iron pier at Rockway beach tonight when a steel girder snapped in two, causing the floor of the dining room to give way and precipitating the diners to the beach, where they were rescued. Several were severely bruised and one woman internally injured.

The 20,000 persons on the board walk and in the pavilions were thrown into a panic, but no more serious results occurred.

She Acknowledged It.

(Baltimore American.)  
"Beauty," we remarked sagely, "is only skin deep."  
"Ah," murmured the vain dame, "I am thin-skinned."  
But we remarked that it was just as painful to skin a thin-skinned as a thick-skinned person, and walked haughtily away.

# BEET SUGAR MEN SEEKING DELAY

## Endeavor to Postpone Senate Action on Cuban Bill.

### MORE TALK ON PHILIPPINES

#### ANOTHER WEEK WILL BE DEVOTED TO DISCUSSION.

WASHINGTON, May 25.—The friends of beet sugar in the senate are preparing to make a hard fight to delay action on the pending Cuban reciprocity bill.

The beet sugar people predict a month's debate on the Nicaraguan bill, but this prediction is not in accord with the views of the advocates of the Nicaraguan bill or its opponents on the isthmian canal committee.

Both these elements are now claiming a majority and are saying that the sooner the vote is reported the better they will be satisfied. The beet sugar men, however, are counting confidently on the co-operation of the side that finds itself in the minority in the matter of postponing the vote on the canal bill.

In other words, the beet sugar advocates welcome the introduction of any question that will defer consideration of the Cuban bill, since they think that there will be no Cuban legislation at all if the kind of a question that will be postponed until after the passage of all the appropriation bills.

Appropriations Coming Up.

The appropriation bills should be passed before the 1st of July in order to supply money for the support of the government after that date, and they consequently expect that considerable time will be given during June to the appropriation bills remaining undisposed of.

They count confidently on the early adjournment of congress after the appropriation bills are out of the way, and they hope that if, after that time, there is an effort to pass the Cuban bill, it will be incumbent on the friends of the bill to maintain a quorum in the senate.

"It would be hardly fair," said a beet sugar Republican senator today, in discussing the contingency mentioned, "to ask the friends of the proposed reduction to assist in prolonging a session in midsummer for the purpose of passing a measure which they do not want to see enacted into law."

There is still a considerable element in the senate opposed to tariff reduction, and it is asserted by the beet sugar men that the forty-five Republicans necessary to pass the bill have not yet been secured.

It is declared, however, that the practically unanimous vote could be secured for a rebate measure.

Another Week on Shipping Bill.

From present indications, the senate will devote another full week, if not longer time, to consideration of the Philippines bill. The prediction is freely made that a vote will not be reached before the middle of the following week. There are still a number of set speeches promised on the bill, and some other speakers have indicated whether they will speak or not.

Senator Burrows will be heard tomorrow in advocacy of the bill, and among others who are expected to speak during the week are Senators Patterson, Pettus, Bailey and Bacon, in opposition to the bill, and Senator Spooner, in its support. When the set speeches are over, the senate will make an effort to secure two or three days' time for consideration of amendments, allowing speeches not exceeding ten or fifteen minutes on each of them.

No Memorial Day Session.

It is not expected that there will be any session on Friday, Memorial day. There may be an effort to keep the senate in session, but this effort will be antagonized.

The continued deferment of the time for taking a vote on the Philippines measure has caused considerable anxiety among the friends of the bill, and the discussion of the Nicaragua canal bill and the Cuban reciprocity bill, which will be taken up next in succession, or jointly.

BALL GAME NEARLY ENDS IN LYNCHING

Florence, Colo., May 25.—A riot occurred at a baseball game here this afternoon, which nearly resulted in the lynching of a negro named Jason Wilson.

After the game between the Colorado Fuel & Iron team and the Florence Eagles, Wilson, who was driving in a buggy, tried to pass everyone on the crowded road. He ran into the buggy occupied by Omer Johnson, a local gambler, and the wheels of the two vehicles became locked. Angry words followed and the two men got out of their buggies and began to fight. The crowd closed around them and began beating and kicking the negro. A half dozen officers rescued Wilson, but they had to draw their guns to stand off the crowd.

FLOODS MAKE HAVOC IN MACLEOD, ALBERTA

MacLeod, Alberta, May 25.—The disastrous results of the five days' storm, just over, have completely isolated this district from the rest of the world. The whole country has been flooded, rivers and smaller streams are swollen to impassable proportions, and railroad and highway bridges have been swept away.

Traffic is completely tied up on the Crow's Nest Pass railroad to the Fernie mines. The Dominion government bridge across the Old Man river and also the other bridge have been carried away. Other bridges carried out are the traffic bridges across the Belly and the Old Man rivers at Willow Creek. The destruction to livestock on the ranges is enormous.

KILLED ON RANCH.

Hired Man Is Shot During a Severe Quarrel.

Wolcott, Colo., May 25.—As a result of a shooting on the ranch of Mrs. E. Kuhn, John Quinn is dead and Dan Fields, son-in-law of Mrs. Kuhn, is under arrest.

Quinn was working on the ranch and had a reputation as a bad character. He and Fields had a quarrel and the latter ordered Quinn to leave the place. Instead of doing so, Quinn secured a shotgun and fired at Fields. Fields seized a rifle and shot Quinn three times, killing him instantly. Fields gave himself up and says he shot in self-defense.

ROME RECEIVES MARTINELLI.

ROME, May 25.—The pope has received Cardinal Martinelli, who gave the pontiff an account of his mission and the church situation in the United States.

# PELEE BELCHES FORTH FIERY STREAM

## AND WORKS ST. MORE HAVOC

### Eruption on St. Vincent.

#### Lava Covers St. Pierre.

London, May 25.—The Morning Post this morning reports the disaster from the island of St. Lucia, dated May 24, which says that St. Pierre is now completely covered with lava and that it will be dangerous to approach the place until the covering hardens. Ash showers and debris continue, says the dispatch.

Port of France, according to the Post's correspondent, the people are apprehensive, lest the lightning flashes shall fire the hundreds of tons of explosive stores of the island. Two hundred of them arrived here yesterday and 17,000 are in the hands of the Guadeloupe. Most of them are destitute.

As the volcanic eruptions diminished after the 19th, some thirty of the inhabitants returned to the island of St. Vincent.

Detonations and smoke and lava from the volcano continued the next day, May 19, and the people still tried to leave Chateau Belair for Kingstown and other towns. A heavy rainfall occurred that day, the first in the district for two months, and the streets, huts and shops were flooded.

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